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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/757,705	01/14/2004	John C. Miller	0246-0001	4474
33297	7590	10/03/2005		
BEEM PATENT LAW FIRM 53 W. JACKSON BLVD., SUITE 1352 CHICAGO, IL 60604-3787			EXAMINER GANAY, STEVEN J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3752	

DATE MAILED: 10/03/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/757,705

Applicant(s)

MILLER ET AL.

Examiner

Steven J. Ganey

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 14-18 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 12 and 13 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 1/14/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112*

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In both claims 10 and 11, line 2, "a second fire-resistant barrier" is recited, however, this is indefinite since it insinuates that a first fire-retardant barrier has been positively recited. Language such as --fire-retardant-- should be used before the word "barrier" in the preamble of claim 1 to clearly define the invention.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bumbarger.

Bumbarger discloses a barrier comprising a fabric sheets joined together to form pockets, which are filled with a superabsorbent polymer, except for the number of

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pockets per square foot, the volumetric capacity range of each pocket and the amount of polymer per cubic inch. Note col. 2, lines 39-67 through col. 3, lines 1-11, col. 5, line 55-67, col. 7, line 50-67 through col. 8, line 12 and col. 9, lines 16-30. Also, see Figures 5 and 6. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the number of pockets per square foot, the volumetric capacity range of each pocket and the amount of polymer per cubic inch as claimed, since Bumbarger teaches that the quilted seams form pockets for the absorbent particles and therefore, the more pockets per square foot the greater protection would be provided. Bumbarger controls the amount of polymer proportional to the size of the pocket.

As to claim 2, such a superabsorbent polymer is well known and would have been a matter of obvious design choice.

*Allowable Subject Matter*

5. Claims 14-18 are allowed.
6. Claims 10 and 11 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.
7. Claims 12 and 13 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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*Conclusion*

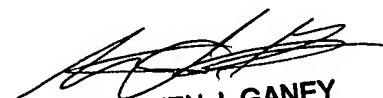
8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Lokken and Grilliot et al show barriers with superabsorbent polymers. Diacos shows a fire blanket. Floyd shows a fire resistant house cover.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steven J. Ganey whose telephone number is (571) 272-4899. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dave Scherbel, can be reached on (571) 272-4919. The fax phone number for this Group is (571) 273-8300.

sjg

9/29/05

  
STEVEN J. GANEY  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
9/29/05